

**Minutes**  
Winthrop Town Council  
Special Meeting

**Monday December 18, 2006 at 7 pm**  
Town Office

Attendance: Vice Chair Jayne Despres, Councilors Patrice Putman, William MacDonald, Kevin Cookson, Linda Caprara, Ken Buck; Town Manager – Cornell Knight, Dan Brooks Fire Chief, John Dovinsky EMS Director, Police Capt Ryan Frost and 35 residents.

Vice Chair Despres called the meeting to Order at 7:00 pm.

Item #132 Hold a public hearing on the Public Safety Building Committee's report and recommendation to build a new complex on Route 202, that will house the Police, Fire and Ambulance Departments.

The hearing was opened at 7:00 pm.

John Dean, Chairman of the Public Safety Building Committee reviewed the committee's report and recommendation to build a 3 department complex on Rte 202 on property currently owned by the Winthrop Utilities District. The building will be energy efficient compared to the 3 existing buildings and will allow for future expansion.

Councilor Buck asked about the US Dept of Agriculture application.

Michael Brennan said there should have been a broader sector of the community on the committee because all members have ties to public safety and there were no women on the committee. He suggested a joint building with the Town of Monmouth at the former Commtel building or the Winthrop Commerce Center. He said the Police Department needs the most attention, and thinks it is too much to add the other departments to the project at this time.

John Dean said the Fire Station needs a roof, floor work and a heating system. It will be more economical to have all the departments in one building.

David Rheume said the committee put 3 notices in the paper to ask for volunteers on the committee.

Jim Randall, Longfellows Lane said the council should put the issue out for referendum.

Larry Fitzgerald said he works on reviewing new public safety complexes as part of Homeland Security and the new requirements for building codes for roofs and doors will make the costs in the \$200/ft to \$225 range, much higher than the committee's report of \$140 per sq foot. Also a generator for that sized building could add \$750,000 to the

project. He asked if there would be more personnel with the additional space and if some functions such as dispatch would be regionalized.

John Dean said the architect estimated costs based on a national averages and a generator is included in the cost estimate. The additional space is needed because the current departments are cramped for space and there will be room to add personnel if needed.

Dale Rice said the project should be put out for a vote and questioned the fitness area and if the size could be reduced by taking out the living quarters.

John Dean said heart attacks are what kill public safety personnel, so the town will want to keep the personnel in the best shape possible. By having fitness equipment at the building means the personnel are in the building more which is good for response times.

Councilor Cookson said to look down the road 40 years to plan for the future.

Ken Johnson said the numbers give him concern. The total cost of \$4,000,000 and questions about the roof and generator. The council should nail down the costs before sending the question to the voters. He suggested looking back 25 years to see how fast things have changed.

Leonard Hall said he was asked to be on the committee to represent the elderly and will work to solicit their vote after the council puts the question out for a vote.

EMS Director John Dovinsky distributed pictures of the Ambulance building and described the health and safety issues. The building was designed for 2 people and there are 6 working now and a total of 40 crew members. The service responds to 1300 calls per year in 3 ambulances, 2 inside and one outside in a canvas cover.

Al Godfrey said the current fire department building was planned to last 50 years, it is now 60. He said the committee is not skewed, in a small town so many people are connected to someone in public safety. The per foot cost estimates include estimates from states with similar climates.

Michael Brennan asked if Option A would be acceptable, which renovates the police department building for the police and ambulance.

John Dean said that building is not in a good location because of the amount of pedestrians and the vehicles have to go up the hill on Main Street. Rte 202 has much better site distance.

Sandy Moody asked about revenues from other towns, population figures, the generator and if a teen club could be added to the project. She also said the issue should go to a referendum.

John Dean said the generator is part of the project, his only uncertainty was whether the Chief had included the generator in the grant application to Homeland Security.

David Rheame said the committee rounded the total costs at \$4 million because the construction estimate was \$3.66 million and the extra costs for equipment is \$230,000.

Ted Frechette said the town can't afford it and the town should have been putting money away every year to pay for such a project.

The hearing was closed at 8:12 pm.

Motion by Cookson Seconded by Caprara to send the Public Safety Building project out for referendum in the next two months, total costs not to exceed \$4,000,000.

Town Manager Knight said the council will likely be getting a petition sometime before February 23 to amend the charter and a referendum vote will have to be done within 120 days.

Councilor MacDonald said he supported the project but the process seems rushed and the council should get answers to some of the questions before setting the date. He has concerns about the revaluation and charter petition.

Councilor Caprara said she has concerns if taxes go up following the revaluation.

Councilor Putman suggested a vote on the complex one month after the revaluation numbers are issued.

Town Manager Knight said each election will be a few thousand dollars.

Vote on the original motion : 5-1 (Councilor MacDonald opposed).

Councilor Despres, this being her last meeting, thanked the citizens for allowing her to serve 3 years on the Town Council.

Motion by Buck Seconded by Putman to adjourn at 8:45 pm. Vote 6-0.